

REMARKS

The Examiner objected to claims 4, 11, 15, 22, 31 and 32 as being dependent upon an allegedly rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

Applicants have amended claim 4 to include all the limitations of claim 1 and believe claim 4 is in condition for allowance. Since claims 2, 3, 5-8, 10, 31 and 32 depend from claim 4, Applicants believe claims 2, 3, 5-8, 10, 31 and 32 are likewise in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 11 to include all the limitations of claim 1 and believe claim 11 is in condition for allowance. Applicants inform the Examiner that claims 33-41 are identical to claims 2-8, 10, 31 and 32 respectively except for their dependence on claim 11. Since claims 33-41 depend from claim 11, Applicants believe claims 33-41 are likewise in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 15 to include all the limitations of claim 12 and believe claim 15 is in condition for allowance. Since claims 13, 14, 16-19 and 21 depend from claim 15, Applicants believe claims 13, 14, 16-19 and 21 are likewise in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended claim 22 to include all the limitations of claim 12 and believe claim 22 is in condition for allowance. Applicants inform the Examiner that claims 42-48 are identical to claims 13, 14, 16-19 and 21 respectively except for their dependence on claim 22. Since claims 42-48 depend from claim 22, Applicants believe claims 42-48 are likewise in condition for allowance.

The Examiner rejected claims 9 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants contend the Examiners rejection of claims 9 and 20 is moot in light of Applicants canceling of claims 9 and 20.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, 12-14, 16-18, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Flower, U.S. Patent No. 5,688,232, in view of Daghighian, European Patent Application Publication No. 0204588 A2, in view of Carlson, U.S. Patent No. 6,861,865 B1. Applicants contend the Examiners rejection of claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, 12-14, 16-18, 20 and 21 is moot in light of Applicants canceling of claims 1, 9, 12 and 20 and amendment of claims 2-5, 7, 8, 11, 13-16, 18-21.

The Examiner rejected claims 8 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Flower/Daghighian/Carlson as applied to claims 1 and 12 above, and further in view of Nogami et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,459,342. Applicants contend the Examiners rejection of claims 8 and 19 is moot in light of Applicants amendment of claims 4, 8, 15 and 19.

Applicants have amended claims 2-5, 7, 8, 11, 13-16, 18-21, 31 and 32 and cancelled claims 1, 9, 12, 20 and 23-30 from further consideration in this application. Applicants are not conceding in this application that those claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Examiner. Applicants

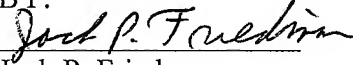
respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuations
and/or divisional patent applications

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully believe that all pending claims and the entire application meet the acceptance criteria for allowance and therefore request favorable action. If Examiner believes that anything further would be helpful to place the application in better condition for allowance, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below. The Director is hereby authorized to charge and/or credit Deposit Account 09-0457.

Respectfully submitted,
FOR: Bonaccio et al.

Dated: 05/09/2007

BY:

Jack P. Friedman
Reg. No. 44,688
FOR:
Anthony M. Palagonia
Registration No.: 41,237

Schmeiser, Olsen & Watts
22 Century Hill Drive, Suite 302
Latham, New York 12110
(518) 220-1850
(518) 220-1857 Facsimile
Agent Direct Dial Number: (802)-899-5460